

Hanukkah: The Hidden Truth



Jn 10:22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

Is Hanukkah a Biblical Feast?
Did the Maccabees celebrate Hanukkah?
Why celebrate Hanukkah today?
What is the Festival of Lights?

Yeshua was in Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication, and it was winter. How did He celebrate Hanukkah?

Whether Yeshua was in Jerusalem to celebrate Hanukkah is not clear from the text; many take the liberty to assume that He was there for Hanukkah.

Yeshua was not well received and some even attempted to kill Him.

How exactly was Hanukkah to be celebrated?

Hanukkah or Chanukkah

The Reason and Purpose of Hanukkah is contained in the definition. Hanukkah means Dedication.

02598 חַנּוּכָּה chanukkah {khan-ook-kaw'}
Meaning: 1) dedication, consecration
Usage: AV - dedication 6, dedicating 2; 8

Hanukkah is specifically associated with the dedication of the Altar on which the burnt offerings and other sacrifices made by fire would be offered to YeHoVaH.

Hanukkah (The Dedication of the Altar) is first mentioned in Numbers 7, but the instructions for it are given in Exodus 29.

There are 3 Hanukkahs or Dedication of Altars in the Old Testament Writings (Tanach).

Moses is given instructions for consecrating the Altar of the Tabernacle for 7 days.

Ex 29:37 For seven days make atonement for the altar and consecrate it. Then the altar will be most holy, and whatever touches it will be holy.

In Numbers 7, Moses dedicated the Altar of the Tabernacle for 7 days according to the instructions given in Exodus 29.

84 This was the dedication of the altar, in the day when it was anointed, by the princes of Israel: twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bowls, twelve spoons of gold: (Num 7:84 KJV)

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88 And all the oxen for the sacrifice of the peace offerings were twenty and four bullocks, the rams sixty, the he goats sixty, the lambs of the first year sixty. This was the dedication of the altar, after that it was anointed. (Num 7:88 KJV)

Solomon dedicated the Altar of the 1st Temple for 7 days.

2Ch 7:8 So Solomon observed the festival at that time for seven days, and all Israel with him—a vast assembly, people from Lebo Hamath to the Wadi of Egypt.

2Ch 7:9 On the eighth day they held an assembly, for they had celebrated the dedication of the altar for seven days and the festival for seven days more.

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2Ch 7:10 On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people to their homes, joyful and glad in heart for the good things the LORD had done for David and Solomon and for his people Israel.

The Children of Israel dedicated the 2nd Temple.

16 And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy,

17 And offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. (Ezr 6:16-17 KJV)

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In the days of the Maccabees, there was an actual Altar to celebrate the Dedication of the Altar. The Maccabees did not gather to celebrate their victory, but to dedicate the Altar with thanksgiving so they could resume worship as prescribed in Torah.

Israel did not gather to celebrate the victory of the Maccabees but as the passage states “the feast of the dedication”. The dedication of what? The Altar.

(During the days of Yeshua, the Altar that had been dedicated was still being used to offer sacrifices to YeHoVaH.)

The story of the Maccabees was not the focus. In fact, the name Maccabees is not mentioned. Today Jews do not gather to celebrate the dedication of the Altar, but the focus seems to be on the lighting of candles on a hanukkiah (a nine-branch menorah) in a certain way for eight days, as prescribed by rabbinic tradition.

Keep in mind, The Book of Maccabees is not part of the Tanach.

Today there is nothing to celebrate; no Altar, no Temple, and unlike the Feasts of YeHoVaH, no Command to keep or celebrate Hanukkah.

How do you celebrate the dedication of an altar that does not exist?

You change the focus and the storyline. Make the focus about the story of the Maccabees NOT the dedication of an Altar that does NOT exist.

Add some traditions: games; a miracle about oil that lasted eight days, that never happened; some prayers, which were never commanded; a hanukkiah, a Hanukkah bush; give some gifts here and there; and Voilà, you got yourself a holiday.

Babylonian Talmud:

Tractate Shabbath Folio 23a

“Moreover, since we pronounce a benediction, 'Who sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to kindle the lamp of Hanukkah,'”

Modern day Hanukkah is a holiday celebrated by the Jews that gets its identity from a collection of writings that are rejected by the Jews.

However, not all Jews celebrate Hanukkah. According to Ashdod Karaite Rabbi Eliyahu Dabbah, there's a December dilemma for Israeli Karaites, too: They don't celebrate Chanukah because the saga of the Maccabees is not mentioned in the Bible.

"So when that holiday comes around," Dabbah explains, "our children feel like outsiders. This forces us to make compromises, which take the form, for example, of the lighting of Chanukah candles in some Karaite homes."

The Book of Maccabees is not a part of the Tanach. The Book of Maccabees is not included in the Tanach but is celebrated by Jews.

The defilement of the Altar

1Mac 1:54 Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side;

1Mac 1:55 And burnt incense at the doors of their houses, and in the streets.

1Mac 1:56 And when they had rent in pieces the books of the law which they found, they burnt them with fire.

1Mac 1:57 And whosoever was found with any the book of the testament, or if any committed to the law, the king's commandment was, that they should put him to death.

1Mac 1:58 Thus did they by their authority unto the Israelites every month, to as many as were found in the cities.

1Mac 1:59 Now the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol altar, which was upon the altar of God.

3 Years Later

1Mac 4:52 Now on the five and twentieth day of the ninth month, which is called the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and eighth year, they rose up betimes in the morning,

1Mac 4:53 And offered sacrifice according to the law upon the new altar of burnt offerings, which they had made.

1Mac 4:54 Look, at what time and what day the heathen had profaned it, even in that was it dedicated with songs, and citherns, and harps, and cymbals.

1Mac 4:55 Then all the people fell upon their faces, worshipping and praising the God of heaven, who had given them good success.

1Mac 4:56 And so they kept the dedication of the altar eight days and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed the sacrifice of deliverance and praise.

1Mac 4:57 They decked also the forefront of the temple with crowns of gold, and with shields; and the gates and the chambers they renewed, and hanged doors upon them.

1Mac 4:58 Thus was there very great gladness among the people, for that the reproach of the heathen was put away.

1Mac 4:59 Moreover Judas and his brethren with the whole congregation of Israel ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, with mirth and gladness.

The Maccabees also celebrated Tabernacles in the 7th month according to 1st Maccabees 10:21.

1Mac 10:21 So in the seventh month of the hundred and sixtieth year, at the feast of the tabernacles, Jonathan put on the holy robe, and gathered together forces, and provided much armour.

The story would be over at the end of 1st Maccabees, but then the Book of second Maccabees sheds more light on the story of Hanukkah.

It appears, according to second Maccabees, that the Maccabees celebrated the dedication of the Altar in conjunction with the Feast of Tabernacles and then issued a decree that the Feast of Tabernacles should be celebrated in the ninth month when YeHoVaH said Tabernacles was to be celebrated in the seventh month.

Solomon celebrated the dedication of the Altar and then celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles. Solomon did not connect or celebrate the Dedication of the Altar simultaneously with the Feast of Tabernacles. They were two distinct celebrations.

From second Maccabees, we find a problem. If in fact they did try to change when Tabernacles was to be celebrated, that was in violation of what the Torah commanded. It therefore appears that second Maccabees added to or took away from the Torah, thereby destroying the Torah of which no one would be obligated to follow.

As it stands, whether they attempted to change the dates of Tabernacles or not, no one is obligated to follow a command to keep a Feast that YeHoVaH had not commanded.

2Mac 1:9 And now see that ye keep the feast of tabernacles in the month Casleu.

2Mac 1:18 Therefore whereas we are now purposed to keep the purification of the temple upon the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, we thought it necessary to certify you thereof,...

...that ye also might keep it, as the feast of the tabernacles, and of the fire, which was given us when Neemias offered sacrifice, after that he had builded the temple and the altar.

How did the Maccabees celebrate the Dedication of the Altar?

The Maccabees celebrated the dedication of the Altar as they would celebrate Tabernacles.

2Mac 10:5 Now upon the same day that the strangers profaned the temple, on the very same day it was cleansed again, even the five and twentieth day of the same month, which is Casleu.

2Mac 10:6 And they kept the eight days with gladness, as in the feast of the tabernacles, remembering that not long afore they had held the feast of the tabernacles, when as they wandered in the mountains and dens like beasts.

2Mac 10:7 Therefore they bare branches, and fair boughs, and palms also, and sang psalms unto him that had given them good success in cleansing his place.

2Mac 10:8 They ordained also by a common statute and decree, That every year those days should be kept of the whole nation of the Jews.

2Mac 10:9 And this was the end of Antiochus, called Epiphanes.

Chanukkah is probably one of the best-known Jewish holidays, not because of any great religious significance, but because of its proximity to Christmas. Many non-Jews (and even many assimilated Jews!) think of this holiday as the Jewish Christmas, adopting many of the Christmas customs, such as elaborate gift-giving and decorations.

It is bitterly ironic that this holiday, which has its roots in a revolution against assimilation and the suppression of Jewish religion, has become the most assimilated, secular holiday on our calendar.

Chanukkah is not mentioned in Jewish scripture; the story is related in the book of Maccabees, which Jews do not accept as scripture. www.jewfaq.org/

The Feast of Dedication of the Altar somehow got changed to a Festival of Lights, totally disconnected from the dedication event that occurred in the Maccabees.

People need to know what they are doing,
what they are celebrating,
why are they celebrating, and
who commanded it.

The only lights lit during the dedication were on the seven-branch menorah lamp in the Temple.

1Mac 4:50 And upon the altar they burned incense, and the lamps that were upon the candlestick they lighted, that they might give light in the temple.



Today, these are the type of lamps lit in celebration of Hanukkah.



“The hanukkiah is a special type of menorah made just for Hanukkah. Instead of having seven branches to represent the seven days of the week, like a regular menorah, it has nine branches. It is used to commemorate and publicize the miracle of the oil, which was enough to last one day but instead lasted eight.”

That miracle is found nowhere in the Maccabees and is a made-up story!

Is there prophetic significance in Hanukkah?

Some say that the abomination that causes desolation was fulfilled in Hanukkah and yet Yeshua said the abomination that causes desolation was yet to come and He did not say that in the context of Hanukkah. Others say that there is prophetic significance in the Festival of Lights.

Yeshua declared in two places that He was the light of the world.

Jn 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Jn 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

He also declared that we are the light of the world.

Mt 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

It appears that the Jews in the days of the Maccabees changed the day Tabernacles was to be celebrated.

2Mac 1:1 The brethren, the Jews that be at Jerusalem and in the land of Judea, wish unto the brethren, the Jews that are throughout Egypt health and peace:

2Mac 1:2 God be gracious unto you, and remember his covenant that he made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, his faithful servants;

2Mac 1:3 And give you all an heart to serve him, and to do his will, with a good courage and a willing mind;

2Mac 1:4 And open your hearts in his law and commandments, and send you peace,

2Mac 1:5 And hear your prayers, and be at one with you, and never forsake you in time of trouble.

2Mac 1:6 And now we be here praying for you.

2Mac 1:7 What time as Demetrius reigned, in the hundred threescore and ninth year, we the Jews wrote unto you in the extremity of trouble that came upon us in those years, from the time that Jason and his company revolted from the holy land and kingdom,

2Mac 1:8 And burned the porch, and shed innocent blood: then we prayed unto the Lord, and were heard; we offered also sacrifices and fine flour, and lighted the lamps, and set forth the loaves.

2Mac 1:9 And now see that ye keep the feast of tabernacles in the month Casleu.

Jn 10:22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

Jn 10:23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

Jn 10:24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

Jn 10:25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

Jn 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

Jn 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Jn 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Jn 10:29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Jn 10:30 I and my Father are one.

Jn 10:31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

Jn 10:32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shown you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

Jn 10:33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

Jn 10:34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

Jn 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

Jn 10:36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

Jn 10:37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

Jn 10:38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

Jn 10:39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

Jn 10:40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

Jn 10:41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

Jn 10:42 And many believed on him there